



Rhode Island's Career Resource Network

News Corner

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Support for Academic and Career Counseling Programs



Career Education Contributes to Academic Achievement



One can hardly pick up a newspaper or watch a news program on television without being reminded of the demands for improved academic achievement by students in our schools. These do affect career education. The stories report that a shocking percentage of students, particularly minorities, lack basic skills in reading, math, and other areas. The number of students graduating from college is increasing in other countries much faster than in the US. Most students graduating from high school enter some form of postsecondary education, but many do not complete the program they begin. President Bush is quoted as saying, "*Every high school diploma must mean that our graduates are prepared for jobs, for college, and for success.*" The National Governor's Association has released *Action Agenda 2005*, calling for redesigned high schools, quality teachers and principals, accountability, and other improvements.

The program changes necessary to produce better results have, in many schools, led to reallocation of resources, including time. Budget problems have made this more complex. In some schools the counseling programs have been scrutinized to determine whether they should be reduced or eliminated.

This situation is not unique to K-12 schools. There have been demands for higher education institutions to make changes to help ensure that their students graduate, and that they have the skills necessary to enter the workforce. Non-profit and other community agencies and government programs with adult education functions are being challenged also, but in a somewhat less public forum. The same deficiencies noted in students are also found in the adult population, and the challenges are equally great.

Leaders in career education have been busy considering how counseling programs in schools and agencies can contribute to the academic and skills achievement of students and adults. *The National Standards for School Counseling Programs* of the American School Counselor Association support the development of the "soft skills" which are needed for employment or more advanced education.

The newly revised National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG), available on the Internet at www.acrnetwork.org, promised to provide supporting activities, and in the past month these have begun to appear under "National Career Development Guidelines for Teachers". Lesson plans for various grades and subjects which address standards of both the academic area and career development are now available, and will increase in number in the coming months. An example is *Which Road Do I Take?*, a lesson for grade 9 English/language arts, which uses an analysis of the Robert Frost poem, *The Road Not Taken*, as the basis of a consideration of decision-making as one component of career development.

Other lesson plans in the first group released are *Weather Disasters*, for grade 9 science, and *Variety of Voices*, for grade 10 English/Language Arts. Educators are invited to submit suggestions for additional lessons which will be developed and included.

Did you Know.....

State by State Education Data, including information on elementary/secondary and postsecondary education, selected demographics, US averages and graphs of results can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/stateprofiles>

The "Opportunities in . . ." industries

brochures have been updated by the Labor Market Information (LMI) Unit. Each contains information on the individual industries including employment, fast growing jobs, wages and projections for more than two dozen occupations. The new brochures can be identified by "January 2005" printed at the bottom of the back page. Career educators can request copies from CRN (462-8790) or LMI (462-8740).

Brochure series includes Opportunities in:

- ◆ Construction
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Health Services
- ◆ Information
- ◆ Leisure & Hospitality
- ◆ Finance & Insurance
- ◆ Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
- ◆ Retail Trade
- ◆ Transportation & Warehousing

View the **Opportunities in Industries** brochures online at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/publications/opportunities.htm





Real Game News

Be Real Game training (designed for grades 9-10) will be held Monday, May 2nd from 8:30 to approximately 2:30 at the Dept. of Labor and Training (DLT) in Cranston. Advanced registration is required. To register please send an email to crn@dlt.state.ri.us with your name, school/organization, phone number and email.

Training for other games in the Real Game series will be scheduled if there are enough requests. If you are interested, please send an email to crn@dlt.state.ri.us so stating, and provide the name of the game. You may also suggest good (or bad) dates. If several requests are received, the training will be scheduled.

Computer-Assisted Career Guidance

Training will be held from 8:30 to 2:30, in the computer lab at the DLT as listed below. Class size is limited to the first 12 persons who register. Registration forms are available to download from the CRN web site, www.dlt.ri.gov/crn.

Thursday, April 7

ChoicesCD

Thursday, April 14

Career Futures (for middle school)

A flyer describing the **RI CIDS** program, the Standards of the Association of Computer-based Systems for Career Information, the programs in the RI CIDS, ordering information, and training/support was distributed in February to guidance directors, school-based coordinators, and others in schools/organizations which use Choices or other CIDS products. If you did not receive a copy and would like one, send an email request to crn@dlt.state.ri.us.

Upcoming Events....

April 7, 2005 Choices CD training - www.dlt.ri.gov/crn

April 14, 2005, Career Futures training - www.dlt.ri.gov/crn

May 2, 2005, Be Real Game training - www.dlt.gov/crn

May 12, 2005 Improved Career Decision-Making (ICDM) workshop - www.dlt.ri.gov/crn

May 13, 2005 Connecticut Learns and Works conference
www.ctlearnsandworks.org

May 20, 2005 RISCA Spring Conference - www.riscassoc.org

June 26-29, 2005 American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Annual Conference - www.schoolcounselor.org

July 12, 2005 Summer Career Development Facilitator class begins; 8:30 – 4:00 Tuesdays and Thursdays through August 18

Watch CRN web site for announcements of other training events

Occupational Focus:

Biomedical Equipment Technician



Many occupations worth exploring, but often overlooked in career planning, are in the technician/technologist categories.

A good example is the Biomedical Equipment Technician, a vital part of the healthcare delivery system. Employed primarily by hospitals or equipment manufacturers or wholesalers, they are responsible for maintaining medical and patient care equipment.

Required skills include problem solving, ability to use tools which are often sophisticated, and written and verbal communication. They may interact with other healthcare professionals in many different fields. In a day they may work with doctors, nurses, therapists, other technicians, maintenance and information technology workers, administrators, finance and safety personnel.

Most entry-level workers have a two-year associate's degree in Biomedical Equipment Technology, and some have received training in the military. Training includes electronics and life sciences, supplemented by an internship. Because equipment is constantly being developed and improved, continuing training is essential. Technicians may become specialists in a particular type of equipment, such as radiology equipment. They may continue with further education such as a bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering. There are also opportunities for technicians with experience to work in marketing and sales, including running a medical equipment business.

In Rhode Island in 2003 (the most recent data available) entry-level Medical Equipment Repairers earned \$15.14/hour. The median (half earned more, half earned less) was \$18.53/hour. Experienced workers earned \$24.21/hour.

The Community College of RI has a Biotechnology program. Bachelor's degree programs in Biomedical Engineering are offered by Brown University and the University of Rhode Island.

For more information on this and related occupations, see the article on Precision Instrument and Equipment Repairers in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, available on the Internet at <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>. The Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI) Instrumentation web site, www.aami.org, has more information about Medical Instrument Technicians and a list of schools with related programs of study.





What is Happening to Youth Employment Rates? This report examines trends in the youth labor market from 1979 to 2000 and the changes during the labor market downturn between 2000-03. It also contains factors that may account for the trends, such as an increase in school enrollment, and presents data on the percentage of youth who are neither enrolled in school nor employed.

www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=6017&sequence=0

www.cdmcareerzone.com is a new web site by Dr. Tom Harrington of Northeastern University. He is known to many RI educators through his presentations at meetings over the past few years. Based on the CareerZone web site by New York State Dept. of Labor, the new version has completely revised the presentation on occupations. It is easy-to-use and very comprehensive. An alternate web address is:

<http://cdm.iradix.com>

Career Planning a textbook by Dr. Tom Harrington and associates, will be published this spring by American Guidance Service. Designed for high school-aged users, it covers a wide variety of topics in career and employment preparation.

Ellen Weaver Paquette, director of the Career Center at Rhode Island College and instructor for the CRN's Career Development Facilitator (CDF) classes, has been selected for the CDF Master Trainer program. Upon completion of this program, Ellen, as a Master Trainer, will be qualified to train instructors for the CDF program.

America's Career InfoNet, www.acinet.org has improved its look and feel, making it easier to use. It includes a Certification Finder, an Industry Profile tool, and the most convenient access to the career videos produced by the New Jersey CRN.

Matching yourself with the world of work: 2004 presents a system for matching personal skills and job characteristics with a large number of occupations. This article was highlighted in the Fall 2004 issue of the Occupational Outlook Quarterly and is available online at <http://stats.bls.gov/opub/ooq/ooqhome.htm>

How Outsourcing Affects IT Jobs - If you want an IT job, plan for the realities of offshore competition. Make yourself valuable to your company on home soil. Read the exclusive feature from Bridges.
<http://careerprnews.bridges.com/explorer/browse/et/itjobs/main.htm>

Nanotechnology could be the future career path for students with an interest in the sciences. **Working in Nanotechnology** is a great online resource that provides the latest news about this growing field.
www.workingin-nanotechnology.com

Measuring the Impact of Electronic Portfolios: A research project announced at Florida's Educational Technology Conference will assess the impact of electronic portfolios on student learning, motivation and engagement in secondary schools. www.taskstream.com/pub/reflect/overview.asp

Females are doing as well as or better than males on many indicators of achievement and attainment, according to a new study by the US Dept. of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics. *The Trends in Educational Equity of Girls and Woman* report is available online:

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005016>

2002 Postsecondary Stats: As part of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, the tables present enrollment data for fall 2002, financial statistics for fiscal year 2002, and student financial aid data for academic year 2001-02. Also included are graduation rate data for the 1996 and 1999 student cohorts.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005168>

The new, improved SAT exam includes a writing section. Designed to measure students' critical thinking and writing skills, it has two elements: a timed essay and multiple choice questions. New technologies have made it practical for the College Board and the Education Testing Service to create a system to administer and score written essays.

www.collegeboard.com/prof/counselors/tests/sat/news.html

The first **Advanced Placement Report** to the Nation, shows that all 50 states and DC have achieved an increase in the percentage of high school students succeeding in college-level AP courses. Research shows that strong correlations exist between AP success and college success.

www.collegeboard.com/press/article/0,3183,41022,00.html

A task force of the National Conference of State Legislatures released results of a study that identified specific areas of the **No Child Left Behind** act that need to be changed. The report lists many recommendations and can be viewed at:

www.ncsl.org/programs/press/2005/NCLB_exec_summary.htm

Are High School Graduates Prepared for Work? A February 2005 report from Achieve states that as many as two in five recent high school graduates say that there are gaps between their education and the skills, abilities, and work habits that are expected of them in college and the work force.

[www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/pollreport/\\$file/pollreport.pdf](http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/pollreport/$file/pollreport.pdf)

The Employment and Training Administration has released the **Protocol for Serving Older Workers**. The goal is to enhance the services provided to an underutilized labor pool, older workers, and to infuse the One-Stop Career Center system with innovative strategies for tapping into this labor pool.

http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=1675

A Web Site Worth Surfing:



www.usafreedomcorpskids.gov

Make a difference. Volunteer.



Counselors and other educators often recommend (or require) their students to engage in volunteer service as a means of contributing to their communities, polishing their skills, and gaining valuable experience. This web site was developed to direct the passions of youths toward volunteer opportunities. The site includes sections for kids (elementary school-age), youths (middle school), parents, and teachers. Ideas for volunteer service include taking a dog from an animal shelter for a walk, setting up a lemonade stand to raise funds for a local charity, and collecting canned food to help restock the shelves of a neighborhood food bank. The site includes web resources, interactive games, a coloring book, and links to other web sites for kids from agencies, such as the FBI, Environmental Protection Agency, National Traffic Safety Administration, and the House of Representatives.

Completing hours of volunteer service can earn the President's Volunteer Service Award. Youths 14 and younger complete 50 or more hours in one year; adults 100 hours or more; families and groups at least 200 hours.

President Bush instituted the USA Freedom Corps, an office of the White House, to help expand volunteer service around the United States.

Do you have comments or suggestions on the contents of our CRN News Corner? Do you have information you'd like us to publish? If so, please contact us at:

Career Resource Network, Thomas Culhane, Career Resource Network Manager,
(401) 462-8790 phone, (401) 462-8766 fax, tculhane@dlt.state.ri.us email, www.dlt.ri.gov/crn web site

Career Resource Network
Rhode Island Department of Labor & Training
1511 Pontiac Avenue
Cranston RI 02920